



KANSAS STATE HISTORICAL SOCIETY

CENTER FOR HISTORICAL RESEARCH

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KANSAS MUSEUM OF HISTORY

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Certification of State Register Listing

The Register of Historic Kansas Places includes all Kansas properties nominated to the National Register as well as lower threshold properties which are listed on the state register only.

Property Name: The John Kutina House

Address: Ellis vicinity, SE 1/4, SW 1/4, S32, T14, R20

County: Ellis

Owner: Ralph and Viola Burns

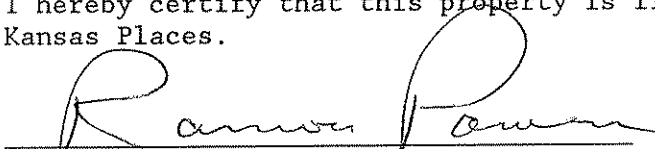
Address: P.O. Box 1276, Hays, KS 67601


National Register eligible ☐

State Register eligible ☒

This property was approved by the Kansas Historic Sites Board of Review for the Register of Historic Kansas Places on February 24, 1990.

I hereby certify that this property is listed on the Register of Historic Kansas Places.


State Historic Preservation Officer


Date

The John Kutina House is located in southwestern Ellis County on the SE 1/4, SW 1/4, S.32, T.14, R. 20. The house is being nominated to the state register for its historical and architectural associations with the settlement of Ellis County. It is a one story limestone house with a ridge hipped roof. Dormers project from the roof slopes, providing bedrooms space in the attic. The original house was built in 1881-1882 and enlarged in 1914. It stands within one half mile of the Butterfield Overland Stage Route near the Smoky Hill River. It is one of five stone houses built in the area, of which only two remain extant.

The Kutinas immigrated from Czechoslovakia to Chicago in the late 1860s. In 1878 the family moved to Kansas. Joseph Kutina settled on a farm nine miles south and one quarter mile west of Ellis. His eight children settled within five miles of their father.

One of Joseph's sons, John Kutina, settled on a farm ten miles south and one half mile west of Ellis. John and his wife Barbara Poledna raised their family of eleven children in the house that is being nominated to the state register. John filed his homestead papers (#5291) for this quarter section on April 4, 1881. His final certification of ownership (#2315) was issued on May 22, 1885. In 1886 he filed his deed with Ellis County, paying \$300 for that right.

The families of Joseph and John Kutina are listed in the 1880 census for Smoky Hill Township, Ellis County. Joseph was 49, his wife Anna was 55, and their grandson Jon was 15. All had been born in Bohemia. John Kutina and his wife Barbara were 24 and both had been born in Bohemia. Their three children, Joseph, 3 and Frank, 2 had been born in Illinois, and Lizia, 2 months, had been born in Kansas.

J. Neale Carman writes in "Foreign Language Units of Kansas" that "Kansas received Czechs from all parts of Bohemia and various areas of Moravia, but as was true for American in general most of them came from the southern part of Bohemia....the soil there was less fertile, the climate more rigorous, and the industrialization less rapid." He continues by noting that most children recorded in the 1880 and 1885 census that lived in Czechoslovakian settlements in Kansas had been born in Europe, "a witness both to the fact that families came to America as units and that most Czechs came either directly to Kansas from Europe or after comparatively short sojourns in other American states."

The 1885 census shows John Kutina's 160 acre farm valued at \$500. His father Joseph Kutina owned a 160 acre farm valued at \$800. Both men raised some wheat, rye, and livestock. The 1895 census values John Kutina's 160 acre farm at \$1000. He cultivated 80 acres, raising wheat and livestock. Joseph Kutina's 160 acre farm retained its earlier value, 150 acres were cultivated.

Barbara Kutina is listed as the head of the household in the 1895 census, supported by public expense at \$8.85 for herself and each of her nine children annually.

The 1905 census shows two of Barbara's sons owning substantially larger farms. J.J. Kutina, 33, owned 380 acres valued at \$3000. He planted 200

acres in wheat. John Kutina, 22, owned 540 acres valued at \$8000 and planted 240 acres in wheat.

In his History of Kansas Andreas writes of Ellis County that "it is not an agricultural county as has been shown by experience. Thinking it was such, thousands of people have located within its borders from time to time, only to learn, after years of effort, that they had made a mistake, and left it for other fields. Proof of this is found in the falling away of the population within the two years from 1880 to 1882. In the former year, according to the United States Census, the population of the county was 6,179, while according to the census taken by the Township Assessors in 1882, the population was only 4,699. While not an agricultural county, it has its advantages, however, and for stock-raising purposes it is very desirable."